**Effect of Feral Camel Population on Australian Ecology**

Feral Camel populations which currently number as many as 750 000, live in Western Australia, South Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. One of the greatest impacts which the feral camel has on the Australian outback is that they compete with grazing animals for forage. Camels will eat almost any plant which means they can survive in areas that aren’t heavily populated by other native animals, however, they have a preference for young leaves, flowers and shrubs over grass. Camels also compete with native animals through their large intake of water which is often in short supply in the areas where the feral camel live. The large numbers of feral camels has led to some plant species becoming extinct in Australia.

**Interpretation of the Feral Camel Food Web**

The animals which are in direct competition with camels are those which are herbivores or omnivores such as, kangaroos, small marsupials, goannas, emus, birds and insects. Because camels have a preference for plants other than grass, they may have less effect on kangaroos and other animals which prefer to eat grass. As camels have large appetites they tend to destroy habitats for small native Australian animals. If the presence of camels reduces population numbers of marsupials and birds, than this may affect populations of large predatory birds, emus and goannas. If insect populations are affected by the reduced amount of plants available then frogs, lizards, bush rats and all the animals which eat frogs, lizards and bush rats will be affected.

**Food Web for Feral Camels in Australia**

Emu

Goannas

Camels

Kangaroos

Snakes

Small marsupials

Bush rats

Frogs

Birds & bird eggs

Lizards

Insects

worms

Spiders

Flowering Trees

Grass

Shrubs